

## Claims

What is claimed is:

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- 1 1. A method for enabling a function of an information handling system configured  
2 for communication with a central system via a communication link, the method  
3 comprising the steps of:  
4 providing communication between the information handling system and the  
5 central system via the communication link;  
6 requesting authentication via the communication link from the central system for  
7 enabling the function on the information handling system; and  
8 upon receipt of the authentication from the central system, enabling the function  
9 to be performed independent of the communication link with the central system.
  - 1 2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the authentication requesting step  
2 comprises communicating an identification for the information handling system to the  
3 central system.
  - 1 3. The method as recited in claim 2, wherein the identification communicating step  
2 further comprises encrypting the information handling system identification.
  - 1 4. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
2 receiving the authentication request from the information handling system in the  
3 central system;  
4 determining if the authentication request is valid; and  
5 upon validating the authentication request, providing authentication to the  
6 information handling system.
  - 1 5. The method as recited in claim 4, further comprising the step of encrypting the  
2 authentication.

1     6.     The method as recited in claim 4, further comprising the step of:  
2             upon determining that the authentication request is invalid, denying  
3     authentication.

1     7.     The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of:  
2             upon failure to receive authentication from the central system, disabling the  
3     function.

1        8.        The method as recited in claim 7, wherein the authentication requesting step is  
2        repeated a predetermined number of times before disabling the function.

1        9.        The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of terminating the  
2        communication link prior to executing at least a part of the function.

1     10.     The method as recited in claim 9, further comprising the step of disabling  
2     the function after usage of a predetermined number of functions enabled by the  
3     authentication has been reached.

1 11. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the function comprises starting the  
2 information handling system.

1 12. The method as recited in claim 11, wherein starting the information handling  
2 system comprises executing a basic input/output system (BIOS).

1 13. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein authentication comprises of an  
2 encrypted token passed between the central system and the information handling system.

1 14. The method as recited in claim 13, wherein the token allows provision of the  
2 function independent of the location of the information handling system relative to the  
3 central system.

1 15. The method as recited in claim 13, wherein the token allows provision of the  
2 function only from a predetermined location with regard to the communication link  
3 between the central system and the information handling system.

1 16. The method as recited in claim 13, wherein the token allows for execution of a  
2 predetermined number of said functions from a remote location.

1 17. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the function comprises loading an  
2 operating system.

1 18. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the function comprises executing a  
2 software application.

1 19. The method as recited in claim 18, wherein each authentication received allows  
2 execution of the software application for a predetermined period of time.

1 20. A program of instructions storable on a medium readable by an information  
2 handling system for implementing a method enabling the information handling system  
3 to execute a function, said information handling system being configured to communicate  
4 with a central system via a communication link, the steps comprising:

5 providing communication between the information handling system and the  
6 central system via the communication link;

7 requesting authentication via the communication link from the central system for  
8 enabling the function on the information handling system; and

9 upon receipt of the authentication from the central system, enabling the function  
10 to be performed independent of the communication link with the central system.

1 21. The program of instructions as recited in claim 20, wherein the authentication  
2 requesting step comprises communicating an identification for the information handling  
3 system to the central system.

1 22. The program of instructions as recited in claim 21, wherein the identification  
2 communicating step further comprises encrypting the information handling system  
3 identification.

1 23. The program of instructions as recited in claim 20, further comprising the steps  
2 of:

3 receiving the authentication request from the information handling system in the  
4 central system;

5 determining if the authentication request is valid; and

6 upon validating the authentication request, providing authentication to the  
7 information handling system.

1 24. The program of instructions as recited in claim 23, further comprising the step of  
2 encrypting the authentication.

- 1 25. The program of instructions as recited in claim 23, further comprising the step of:  
2 upon determination that the authentication request is invalid, denying  
3 authentication.
- 1 26. The program of instructions as recited in claim 20, further comprising the step of:  
2 upon failure to receive authentication from the central system, disabling the  
3 function.
- 1 27. The program of instructions as recited in claim 26, wherein the authentication  
2 requesting step is repeated a predetermined number of times before disabling the  
3 function.
- 1 28. The program of instructions as recited in claim 20, further comprising the step of  
2 terminating the communication link prior to executing at least a part of the function.
- 1 29. The program of instructions as recited in claim 28, further comprising the step of  
2 disabling the function after usage of a predetermined number of functions enabled by the  
3 authentication has been reached.
- 1 30. The program of instructions as recited in claim 20, wherein the function  
2 comprises starting the information handling system.
- 1 31. The program of instructions as recited in claim 30, wherein starting the  
2 information handling system comprises executing a basic input/output system (BIOS).
- 1 32. The program of instructions as recited in claim 20, wherein the function  
2 comprises loading an operating system.
- 1 33. The program of instructions as recited in claim 20, wherein the function

2 comprises executing a software application.

1 34. The program of instructions as recited in claim 33, wherein each authentication  
2 received allows execution of the software application for a predetermined period of time.

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1 35. An information handling system comprising:  
2 a processor for executing a program of instructions on the information handling  
3 system;  
4 a memory coupled to the processor for storing the program of instructions  
5 executable by the processor; and  
6 a communication device coupled to the processor for establishing a  
7 communication link between the information handling system and a central system via  
8 a network; and  
9 said program of instructions capable of configuring the information handling  
10 system to request authentication from the central system via the communication link for  
11 enabling a function, and upon receipt of authentication from the central system, enabling  
12 the function.

1 36. The information handling system as recited in claim 35, wherein the program of  
2 instructions further configures the information handling system to communicate an  
3 identification to the central system.

1 37. The information handling system as recited in claim 36, wherein the information  
2 handling system identification is encrypted.

1 38. The information handling system as recited in claim 35, wherein the central  
2 system, upon receiving the authentication request from the information handling system,  
3 determines if the authentication request is valid, and upon determination that the  
4 authentication request is valid, providing authentication to the information handling  
5 system.

1 39. The information handling system as recited in claim 38, wherein the  
2 authentication is encrypted.

1 40. The information handling system as recited in claim 38, wherein the central  
2 system, upon determining that the authentication request is invalid, denies authentication.

1 41. The information handling system as recited in claim 35, wherein the program of  
2 instructions further configures the information handling system to disable the function  
3 if authentication is not received from the central system.

1 42. The information handling system as recited in claim 41, wherein the  
2 authentication request is repeated a predetermined number of times before disabling the  
3 function.

1 43. The information handling system as recited in claim 35, wherein the program of  
2 instructions is capable of configuring the information handling system to terminate the  
3 communication link prior to execution of at least part of the function.

1 44. The information handling system as recited in claim 43, wherein the program of  
2 instructions is capable of configuring the information handling system to disable the  
3 function after usage of a predetermined number of functions enabled by the  
4 authentication has been reached.

1 45. The information handling system as recited in claim 35, wherein the function  
2 comprises starting the information handling system.

1 46. The information handling system as recited in claim 45, wherein starting the  
2 information handling system comprises executing a basic input/output system (BIOS).

1 47. The information handling system as recited in claim 35, wherein the function  
2 comprises loading an operating system.



1 48. The information handling system as recited in claim 35, wherein the function  
2 comprises executing a software application.

1 49. The information handling system as recited in claim 48, wherein each  
2 authentication received allows execution of the software application for a predetermined  
3 period of time.

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1 50. An information handling system comprising:  
2 means for executing a program of instructions on the information handling  
3 system;  
4 means, coupled to the executing means, for storing the program of instructions  
5 executable by the executing means;  
6 means, coupled to the executing means, for establishing a communication link  
7 with a central system via a network; and  
8 said program of instructions capable of configuring the information handling  
9 system to request authentication from the central system via the communication link for  
10 enabling a function, and upon receipt of authentication from the central system, enabling  
11 the function.

1 51. The information handling system as recited in claim 50, wherein the program of  
2 instructions further configures the information handling system to communicate an  
3 identification to the central system.

1 52. The information handling system as recited in claim 51, wherein the information  
2 handling system identification is encrypted.

1 53. The information handling system as recited in claim 50, wherein the central  
2 system, upon receiving the authentication request from the information handling system,  
3 determines if the authentication request is valid, and upon determination that the  
4 authentication request is valid, providing authentication to the information handling  
5 system.

1 54. The information handling system as recited in claim 53, wherein the  
2 authentication is encrypted.

1 55. The information handling system as recited in claim 53, wherein the central  
2 system, upon determining that the authentication request is invalid, denies authentication.

1 56. The information handling system as recited in claim 50, wherein the program of  
2 instructions is capable of configuring the information handling system to disable the  
3 function if authentication is not received from the central system.

1 57. The information handling system as recited in claim 56, wherein the  
2 authentication request is repeated a predetermined number of times before disabling the  
3 function.

1 58. The information handling system as recited in claim 50, wherein the program of  
2 instructions is capable of configuring the information handling system to terminate the  
3 communication link prior to executing at least a part of the function.

1 59. The information handling system as recited in claim 58, wherein the program of  
2 instructions further configures the information handling system to disable the function  
3 after usage of a predetermined number of functions enabled by the authentication has  
4 been reached.

1 60. The information handling system as recited in claim 50, wherein the function  
2 comprises starting the information handling system.

1 61. The information handling system as recited in claim 60, wherein starting the  
2 information handling system comprises executing a basic input/output system (BIOS).

1 62. The information handling system as recited in claim 50, wherein the function  
2 comprises loading an operating system.

1 63. The information handling system as recited in claim 50, wherein the function  
2 comprises executing a software application.

